

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

1. Question: What is the FRT and who is it made up of?

Answer: The FRT is an acronym for Field Response Team (FRT). The FRT is made up of Wardens, Environmental Scientists (ES), and an Oil Spill Prevention Specialists (OSPS) who are usually assigned to OSPR field offices. At any given time, three FRT members (one warden, one ES, and one OSPS) are on call and are OSPR's first-responders to an incident. Sacramento OSPR employees are generally considered non-FRT staff.

A Powerpoint presentation describing an overview of the FRT responsibilities can be viewed at the following location:

[FRT_powerpoint.pdf](#)

2. Question: I work in Sacramento and am not on the FRT. Am I on call?

Answer: No, you are not on call outside of your normal work hours, but according to your duty statement, you are required to respond to an incident as needed.

3. Question: During a pollution incident response, where will my assignment come from -- the OSPR Administrator, my supervisor, the State On-Scene Coordinator (SOSC), the ODO?

Answer: Your assignment to a response may come from any of the above. As a general rule, early requests for additional resources (personnel and/or equipment) originate from the FRT and are made to the SOSC. The SOSC prioritizes all requests for additional personnel and will coordinate with the Sacramento Operations Support Center to identify and dispatch available resources.

In support of the SOSC you may be notified by:

- Your supervisor or manager (all assignments shall be worked though your immediate manager/supervisor (ManSup).
- Logistics Section (once established)
- Operation Duty Officer (ODO)

When you are given your assignment, you should receive the following information: where to report (command post, OWCN, etc), what ICS position you may be filling, when and who to report to or who to contact for further information.

4. Question: How will I get notified of an incident?

Answer: Marine spill notifications originate from OSPR's Spill Tracking Unit. This unit is located upstairs in Sacramento and is open during normal working hours. After hours and on weekends, spill reports are sent to NORCOM. Both the Spill Tracking Unit and NORCOM contact the FRT directly once an incident has occurred. In significant incidents, the ODO will be notified and he/she will send out an email outlining what has occurred and our response to it. If you are called out directly from the field, you should confirm with the person who called you that your supervisor has been or will be notified of your deployment by the SOSC, ODO or the OSPR Administrator. The DFG Serious Event Notification is distributed to all of the department heads within OSPR, DFG Headquarter Management, and Agency.

5. Question: What is the role of a manager or supervisor in deploying available staff to the spill sites (whether trained or untrained)? Once I am called out to a spill, who is my supervisor?

Answer: Once a request for additional personnel has been received, ManSups will work with the requestor to best meet the incident needs. ManSups have the final say in deciding which personnel are deployed as long as they are qualified. On some occasions, employees already tasked with going to the response will conflict with regular day-to-day work tasks. In this case, the employee is committed to the response and answers to the UC/ICS chain of command and the ManSup will have to negotiate with the Administrator or the ODO to get the employee out of the response.

6. Question: Who do I talk to in Sacramento about my availability once we have a spill?

Answer: Your supervisor/manager should know your availability once a spill occurs. It is important that you immediately communicate your prior commitments before being selected to respond.

7. Question: What about my day-to-day job and tasks, who will do this?

Answer: Your regular supervisor will have to decide what portion of your daily workload will need to be shifted to other employees.

8. Question: Who do I report to once assigned to an incident?

Answer: Go to where you are assigned. This could be to the Operations Support Center at OSPR, it could be a command post, or it could be a location in the field. Upon arrival, check in at the designated check-in location. Check-in may be found at locations such as:

- Incident Command Post (ICP)
- Base
- Staging Areas
- Helibases
- Wildlife Rehabilitation Center

Note: If you are instructed to report directly to an on-scene assignment, check in with the Division/Group Supervisor or the Operations Section Chief. There, you should receive an incident briefing and safety tailgate from immediate supervisor (This may be a Unit Leader or Section Chief). It should be noted that the Incident Site Safety Plan must be read and signed before engaging in response activities.

9. Question: What role am I filling at a spill?

Answer: During an incident, you will initially be asked to fill a role in which you are qualified; however, once at the incident, be flexible. You will be assigned to fill a role where you are needed. You may also be asked to participate in the response as a trainee or working to support the incident from Sacramento. The roles are too numerous to list.

Your OSPR supervisor should clearly discuss your primary and secondary role during a pollution incident. In preparation for your role, you and your supervisor should have developed a training plan that provides you the basic knowledge and skills to complete your response assignments. Note: it is possible that once you are incorporated into the response your assignment may change based on current needs. For instance, you may be asked to make copies, act as a field observer, or utilize other skill sets that you possess.

10. Question: Are there any particular expectations of me?

Answer: If you are qualified to fill a particular ICS role, then it is expected that you will bring the necessary equipment, Go-kits, ICS tools and forms to perform the role you are assigned. It is your responsibility to make sure all equipment is in working order. If you have equipment stored and not used until a response is in effect then you should periodically (monthly at a minimum) check

to make sure all is in working condition). Bring clothing suitable for your assignment. Make sure you have proper footwear (no open toes) and shirts or a jacket that identify you as a DFG/OSPR employee.

Chapter 2 of the Incident Management Handbook (IMH) outlines some general responsibilities and expectations that may be expected of you. Your supervisor should discuss expectations with you when you were hired.

11. Question: How long will I be there?

Answer: The length of your deployment depends on many factors. These factors include: size of incident, operational periods (12 hours a day vs. 24 hours), or availability of other qualified personnel (vacation, sick, personnel). On larger incidents, a deployment can last as long as 2-3 weeks. It is important to note that if you have special needs (i.e family obligations), vacations, or scheduled plans, you should notify your immediate supervisor upon receiving your assignment.

12. Question: Who is making my travel arrangements?

Answer: Your travel arrangements can be made for you, by the Support Center in Sacramento, or the Logistics Section. You will be told if you need to make arrangements on your own. All flight, hotel, and car reservations can be made through Sacramento Travel at 1-888-645-6437.

13. Question: Which employee will be my backup?

Answer: A selection will be made from the "qualified position" list, and the ManSups should decide whose employee will be initially committed to the response effort, and the ManSups should think about identifying backups when the initial employees are also assigned out. The qualified position list can be found on the OSPR Intranet at the following location:

http://10.249.32.192/ospr/misc/ics_positions-4-15-08.pdf

14. Question: How do I get any background information about the spill, issues or concerns that have come up already or what my co-workers have done so far to assist in the response effort, if anything?

Answer: Before you are assigned to a position, the person assigning you should have this information. If you have not been deployed, at larger incidents, the Operations Support Center will be manned and can provide you with background information.

Once deployed, you can get good information from:

- The Planning and the Tactics meetings. These provide situation status briefings.
- Ask the person you are reporting to or the Section Chief.
- Check the Situation Status Board located by the Situation Unit.
- Review the Incident Action Plans (IAP) from the previous days.
- Talk to co-workers who have been released from the incident.
- Check the OSPR spill Web site for the most current information.

15. Question: If I need some assistance from OSPR or DFG HQs while I'm responding, does that need to go through my regular supervisor or can I just call someone in my OSPR unit or DFG HQ and ask for some help?

Answer: Once you are assigned to an incident, all requests for help shall go through your Unit Leader or Group Supervisor. Assistance requests for the next operational period will be brought to the Tactics meeting for the next operational period.

16. Question: Should I funnel information back through the Operations Support Center or someone else?

Answer: Generally, any information related to the incident shall be funneled through your proper chain-of-command. For example, if you are working in an on-water recovery group, your chain-of-command would be to report that information to the Recovery and Protection Branch. If a Branch was not established, then you report to the Operation Section Chief or Deputy. If you are working in a Planning Unit, your information would go back through the Planning Section Chief or Deputy.

Provide information back to the Operations Support Center if they are expecting it from you. Important: do not accept assignments from Sacramento unless they are relayed to you through the unified command. When you are deployed to a response you work for the response and all work assignments will come from the unified command, not your Sacramento supervisor.

17. Question: Who has signing/approval authority? Administrator delegation to SOSOC?

Answer: This depends on the issue. The SOSOC will approve the daily IAPs, as the representative of the Administrator. Formal designations of a party responsible for a spill and formal declarations of a spill would be by the Administrator (or an express designee). Formal cleanup and abatement or cease and desist orders would come from the Administrator (or an express designee).

The approval to use dispersants and other chemical response methods would come from the Regional Response Team. Orders to close fisheries would come from the DFG Director (or an express designee).

18. Question: Operations Support Center - how it works, who should staff?

Answer: The Operations Support Center is a place that provides support, general guidance, and communication with field staff during an event. It will:

- Provide additional state personnel to assist in the response.
- Provide early logistical support such as hotel rooms, travel, and financial assistance.
- Coordinate with the field Incident Command Post to receive and complete needed assignments.
- Not act as or interfere with the Logistic Section established at the ICP.
- Maintain liaison with appropriate federal, state and local contacts regarding response activities.
- Receive incident information from the field to complete necessary reports/briefs to the Department, Natural Resources Agency, etc.
- Ensure that the Governor's Office, the Natural Resources Agency, and appropriate legislators are updated on all relevant events.
- Track all decisions and costs associated with the operation of the OSC.

19. Question: What is an Operations Duty Officer (ODO) and what role does the ODO have?

Answer: The ODO is responsible to perform the following functions as necessary:

- Ensure notification of the FRT or Regional Pollution Coordinator for spills in their area of responsibility.
- Support the Field Response Team (FRT) and/or State On-Scene Coordinator (SOSC) in any way possible.
- Assist the SOSC in selection of the appropriate Oil Spill Response Contractors.
- Provide additional state personnel to assist in the response.
- Activate the Oiled Wildlife Care Network (OWCN) for wildlife hazing, capture and intake, or wildlife overflight contracts, when requested.
- Act on behalf of the Administrator for spills until directed otherwise.
- Notify the Administrator of spills when necessary.
- Keep the Administrator and deputies fully informed of the current situation at all times.
- Complete a Director's Alert for any incident that may be of interest to the Director.

- Open the Operations Support Center and ensure that is adequately staffed.

20. Question: What is IAP software?

Answer: Incident Action Plan Software (IAP Software) is a commercial software tool for incident management. By using the ICS process, IAP Software electronically manages daily Incident Action Plan tasks, instead of performing these tasks with paper forms and worksheets. The USCG, OSPR, and many companies have purchased this software package for use at spills.

21. Question: What and where is the fishery closure protocol and flow chart?

Answer: Fisheries closures may be required for oil spills in marine waters. The purpose of this joint protocol is to describe and standardize operational procedures to ensure that the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) meet the requirements for fisheries closures where there is a likely significant public health risk due to a marine oil spill and reopening of the closures.

The protocol still requires some refinements and we are currently coordinating with OEHHA and NOAA to solidify these refinements. In the meantime, you can read the DRAFT Protocol and supporting documentation at the following location: L:\OSPR Operations Center\Planning\FisheryClosure and L:\OSPR Operations Center\Fish Closure Issues.

22. Question: Who sends out the email telling us we have a spill?

Answer: Email may come from a variety of sources:

- Your co-worker
- Your manager or supervisor
- The ODO (DFG Serious Event Notification) and updates
- The Assistant Deputy, Deputy, or Administrator

In significant events, you will most likely receive an email from the Administrator or someone he or she designates.

23. Question: How will IT and communications support be provided at the spill and in Sacramento?

Answer: IT and communications staff may be sent to the incident. IT support may be needed specifically for the Operations Support Center, at least initially for setup.

24. Question: What is NRDA and what is its role in spill response?

Answer: The NRDA is a separate, parallel effort to the spill response and cleanup. “NRDA” stands for Natural Resource Damage Assessment. Following a spill event, and depending on the affected natural resources, an NRDA will be performed. All NRDA activities during spill response are communicated and coordinated with the spill ICS through an NRDA Representative (see DFG-OSPR Policy and Guidelines Manual, Section 106).

The natural resource trustees initially responding to a spill may include representatives from a number of state and federal regulatory agencies, including DFG-OSPR, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The natural resource trustees may also involve various contractors in the injury assessment, including private organizations, university staff, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), to assist in ephemeral data collection for injury assessment. The goal of the NRDA is to examine the natural resource injuries from oil spills or other pollution events, to quantify the injuries, and to both restore the injured resources and compensate the public for the lost interim ecological benefits and uses of those resources.

June 10, 2009